



**Pilgrim Evangelical
Lutheran Church**
820 Belknap Street
Superior, WI 54880
(715) 392-4731

Non-profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Superior, WI 54880
Permit No. 1194

Sunday Worship Service: 9:30 a.m.
Website: www.plcsuperior.org
Facebook: [PilgrimSuperior](https://www.facebook.com/PilgrimSuperior)

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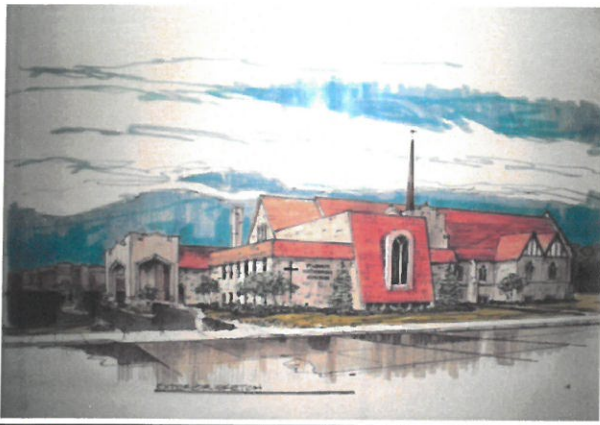
THIS MONTH AT PILGRIM

Worship Schedule in March

- March 3 – Worship at 9:30 a.m. (Mariner’s Sunday)**
- March 6 – Worship at 6:00 p.m (Lent Worship & Soup)**
- March 10 – Worship at 9:30 a.m.**
- March 13 – Worship at 6:00 p.m. (Lent Worship & Soup)**
- March 17 – Worship at 9:30 a.m.**
- March 20 – Worship at 6:00 p.m. (Lent Worship & Soup)**
- March 24 – Worship at 9:30 a.m.**
- March 28 – Worship at 6:00 p.m. (Maundy Thursday)**
- March 29 – Worship at 6:00 p.m. (Good Friday)**
- March 31 – Worship at 9:30 a.m. (Easter Sunday)**

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Monthly Pilgrim Progress

To make things easy we are going to have the Progress deadline be the **15th** of each month. If there is a problem contact Judy and talk to her.

Church Office Hours

Monday—Thursday: 9:00 am—1:00 pm
Church Phone: 715-392-4731

E-mail and Website Addresses

officemgr@plcsuperior.org (Judy)
tanner@plcsuperior.org (Pastor Tanner)
(new email for Pastor)

Church website: www.plcsuperior.org
Facebook: PilgrimSuperior
Synod website: www.nswi.org
ELCA website: www.elca.org

PLC ONLINE ~ Check out Pilgrim's website at www.plcsuperior.org for the monthly calendar and newsletter, pictures, and much, much more.

Reminders:

Theology on Tap at the Tap on Tower (1106 Tower Avenue) 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday's

Bible Study at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday's at Pilgrim with Pastor Tanner.

Still need a couple people to sign up for Soup Supper on Wednesdays with Lent Worship.

STAFF

Pastor Rev. Tanner Howard
Office Manager Judy Hagen
Custodian Mark Pero
Music Director/Pianist Lorelei Holland
Violinist Eliza Wilson
Organist Dr. David Tryggestad
Choir Director Curt Hanson
Education Coordinator Rebecca Waterhouse

**SYNODICALLY
AUTHORIZED MINISTERS**

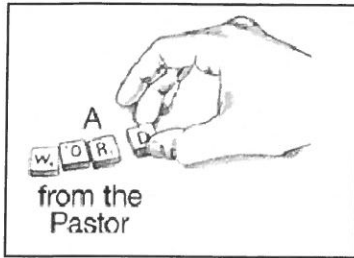
Jenny Dudderar
Andrea Rubesch

COUNCIL

Council President . . . Dan Breneman
Council Vice-President . . . Tad Matheson
Council Secretary Courtney Dietsche
Congregation Treasurer Don Miller
Financial Secretary Julie McLaren
Mary Johnson-Garay, Colleen Elonen,
Ted Nelson, Sandy Breitzmann and Jeff Gronski

PLC ON FB: Go to your **FACEBOOK** page. Enter 'Pilgrim Superior' in the search box. When Pilgrim's FB comes up, 'LIKE' it. You can then see regular PLC news, updates and photos.





March 2024

*“Light of my soul, after victory won, may I reach heaven’s joys,
O Heaven’s Sun! Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of All!”*

Be Thou My Vision | ELW 793

Saints and Siblings in Christ,

One of my favorite things about the traditions of our church is our liturgical calendar. For me, there’s just something lovely about the way that the seasons and celebrations of the church year carry us forward together. There’s something comforting about the texts and traditions, the colors and the songs that help us mark time as we pilgrimage together through our lives of faith. Special days like Ash Wednesday or Easter Sunday, the short season of Christmas and the long span of Ordinary Time match the ebbs and flows of the world around us, and, at least for me, they bring a sense of peace and continuity in the midst of a world that is often unpredictable or unreliable.

Of course, there are times when those practiced, stayed traditions become ruts that we can’t get out of. Instead of guides for our collective gatherings, they become legalistic demands that things be ‘done a certain way.’ Which is why one of the things about Pilgrim that I already love is our willingness to try new things and not allow ourselves to get ‘stuck’ in one way of doing things. Our Praise and Worship and traditional organ Sundays, along with our blended worship the rest of the time make us a stronger congregation – more able to notice the spaces the Spirit is moving us, and better able to open ourselves to worship that isn’t what we’re used to. These practices stop us from being a ‘consumer church’ – where everything done on Sunday has to cater to ME and that I WANT – and helps us live into the joys that come from the many traditions and practices that make up our shared community of faithful folks.

This month is a near perfect example of this. March is filled with fun ‘additions’ to the calendar that bring spots of spontaneity to our life together. It begins with Mariner’s Sunday on March 3rd with Pastor Doug Paulson from the Seafarers Center joining us for worship and fellowship. Then, March 10th is Laetare Sunday, the Fourth Sunday in Lent, traditionally celebrated as a particularly joyous day midway through the season of Lent. St. Patrick’s Day falls on a Sunday this year as well, giving us the opportunity to celebrate some of the wonderful Irish music scattered throughout our hymnal.

Continued . . .

Palm Sunday will feature a special appearance of our friend and organist, David Tryggestad. Then we march through Holy Week, with Maundy Thursday, community Good Friday and Easter Sunrise services, and our own celebration of Christ's resurrection here at Pilgrim.

Woven throughout this month of worship and gathering will be the steady traditions that have guided faithful folks for generations and those new practices that remind us that the Holy Spirit continues to work and inspire and guide us. What a joy to be part of a congregation that boldly takes hold of the many strings that make up the tapestry of worship across Christ's church to weave them into something unique and beautiful for God's people in this place. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Peace,
Pastor Tanner

Holy Week Schedule

Sunday, March 24 – 9:30 a.m. Palm Sunday Worship at Pilgrim



Wednesday, March 27 – 6:00 p.m. First Communion Class at Pilgrim
(for anyone interested)
(Please sign up in the Narthex or call the office)



Thursday, March 28 – 6:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship at Pilgrim



Friday, March 29 – 6:00 p.m. Good Friday Ecumenical Worship at Pilgrim



Sunday, March 31 – 6:49 a.m. Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service at Wisconsin Point
(At Lot 1 out at Wisconsin Point)



Sunday, March 31 – 9:30 a.m. Easter Worship at Pilgrim
(Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Come let us worship!)



MARCH SERVERS

*Below is the list of those who are signed up to help with our worship service. If you are signed up and cannot make it, please find someone to fill in for you and also let the office know. Thank you to all of you for helping with our worship here at Pilgrim.
Praise God from whom all blessings flow!!*

March 3 – 3rd Sunday in Lent-Mariner Sunday

Ushers: Team 2: Tad Matheson, Capt.
Worship Asst: Jean Miller
Sound System: Fred
Altar Guild: Julia and Sandy
Hospitality: Laura Swanson
Greeter: Paul & Colleen Goesling

March 10 – 4th Sunday in Lent

Ushers: Team 3:
Worship Asst: Jan Cummings
Sound System: Tyler
Altar Guild: Laura and Greg
Hospitality: Anita Maki
Greeter: ??? anyone

March 17th – 5th Sunday in Lent

Ushers: Team 4: Tyler Austreng, Capt.
Worship Asst: Evie Warring
Sound System: Colleen
Altar Guild: Rachel and Colleen
Hospitality: Christine Busche
Greeter: ??? anyone

March 24th – Palm Sunday

Ushers: Team 1: Ted Nelson, Capt.
Worship Asst: Anna Hansen
Sound System: Jeff
Altar Guild: Elaine & Nancy
Hospitality: Joy Higgins
Greeter: ??? anyone

March 28th – Maundy Thursday

Ushers: Team 2: Tad Matheson, Capt.
Worship Asst: Mary Houk
Sound System: Jamie
Altar Guild: Julia & Sandy

March 29th – Good Friday

Ushers: Team 3:
Sound System: Tyler

March 31st – Easter Sunday

Ushers: Team 4: Tyler Austreng, Capt and Team 1: Ted Nelson, Capt.
Worship Asst: Sue Connolly
Sound System: Colleen
Altar Guild: Laura & Greg
Hospitality: Laura Swanson
Greeter: ??? anyone

Church Statistics

January 2024

Total In-House Sunday Attendance: (4 Sunday Services)	230
Average In-House Sunday Attendance:	58
Total Online Sunday Attendance:	128
Average Online Sunday Attendance:	30
Total Combined Attendance:	358
Total Average Attendance:	88
Envelope Offering (General Fund)	\$ 5,792.00
Loose Offering (non-envelope):	\$ 256.00
Electronic Offering (General Fund):	\$ 2,023.18
Total General Giving:	\$ 8,071.18

Scripture Readings March 2024 Lectionary B

March 3 – 3rd Sunday in Lent

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalm 19

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

March 10 – 4th Sunday in Lent

Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

March 17 – 5th Sunday in Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 51:1-12

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33

March 24 – Palm Sunday

Isaiah 9:1-7

Psalm 92:1-5, 12-15

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 11:1-11

March 28 – Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-14

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31-35

March 29 - Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

Psalm 22

Hebrews 10:16-25

John 18:1 – 19:42

March 31 – Easter Sunday

Isaiah 25:6-9

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Acts 10:34-43

Mark 16:1-8

Coins for the Community

We are going to continue collecting for Harbor House through March. Drop your change in the jar (or bills) and lets see what we collect this next time.
Thank you for your help!



The Quarterly Quilting group met Feb 10th and assembled quilts in anticipation of National Quilting Day (March 16th). It celebrates quilts and those who make them annually on the third Saturday in March. The National Quilting Association started National Quilting Day in 1991. On Sunday, March 24th we will have many of our quilts on display in the sanctuary. We encourage anyone who has a suggestion of where to donate quilts, from shut-ins, home-bound folks to local charities, to please let Colleen Elonen know. While our “quilts” are more like “blankets” it is nice to share them as warm hugs when folks may be in need!

Attention Altar Guild members. Our spring cleaning and polishing meeting in preparation for Holy Week and Easter Sunday is scheduled for Wednesday, March 13th at 10:00 a.m. Please try to attend and we always welcome any additional help from the congregation. A light lunch will be provided. Looking forward to seeing you and Thank You!
Any questions please talk Laura.



Mariners Sunday will be during worship on March 3rd. Pastor Doug Paulson, Executive Director of the Seafarers House, will be here to speak. The special offering that will be taken goes to the Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers. There will be a reception after worship. Please sign up on the Kiosk to bring items needed for the reception following the service.

Easter Chancel Garden

We will doing Easter Lily's again this year. There are order forms on the Kiosk at church. Or you can just write stuff on a piece of paper too. We need who it is from, phone, in memory of or in honor of (or both), how many plants and the money. They are \$12.00 each again this year. All orders need to be turned in by March 17th.



Pilgrimage through Lent | Created for Community

Throughout our Lenten pilgrimage this season we will gather around texts that remind us of our connections to the church and the world. Together we are in community with Creation, the Saints, our Neighbors, those on the Margins, and Christ. As we gather on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, we will encourage one another in faithful living and take time to be renewed in the promises of God. Wednesday evenings you are invited to gather in the chapel for food and worship together starting at 6:00. We'll also be collecting goods for our ministry partners throughout the season, so keep an eye on the announcements.

February 28th | In Community with All the Saints – Worship and Meal at 6:00

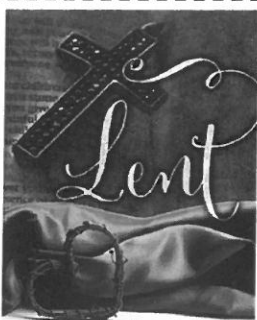
- Community Partner Project: The Seafarers Center
 - o In support of our longtime partnership with the ministry at the Seafarers Center, and in anticipation of Mariner's Sunday (March 3rd) we will be accepting a special offering for the Center and collecting toothpaste, toothbrushes, bars of soap, combs, and washcloths.

March 6th | In Community with Our Neighbor

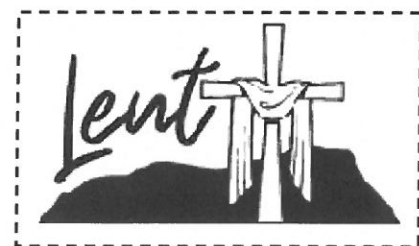
- Community Partner Project: Helping OUR Neighbors in Need
 - o Pilgrim is blessed with a facility full of amazing resources that are desperately needed by members of our community. Little things, like access to a shower or laundry, can make a huge impact on people's lives. To that end, we will be collecting bath towels, wash cloths, shampoo/soap, and laundry detergent (unscented), as well as small toiletries to disperse here at Pilgrim.

March 13th | In Community with Those on the Margins

- Community Partner Project: CASDA – The Center Against Sexual and Domestic Abuse
 - o CASDA's mission is to provide supportive services to individuals hurt by domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse while advocating for a community effort to end violence. We are collecting items for the emergency shelter CASDA operates, including: cleaning supplies (disinfectant spray and wipes, floor cleaner, bleach, toilet bowl cleaner), 42 gal heavy duty garbage bags, laundry soap and dryer sheets, and personal care/hygiene items.



"Even now," declares the Lord,
"return to me with all your heart."
Isaiah 60:1



Pilgrimage through Lent | Created for Community - continued

March 20th | In Community with Christ

- Community Partner Project: Water Is Life “Madzi Ndi Moyo”
 - o For over 30 years the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin has had a partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi. Here at Pilgrim we are blessed to be partnered with Mzuzu Parish in Northern Malawi. In response to a call from these partners, Bishop Laurie has challenged the congregations of our synod to raise \$40,000 by June 2024 to build two new solar-powered, deep drilled borehole wells. We invite you to consider a gift toward this program as we remember that Christ’s Community is All People.

March 27th | First Communion Class

- In lieu of a soup supper and worship service this evening, you are invited to a First Communion Class (or a refresher course!) and bread baking party. While we don’t require a specific class before someone takes communion here at PLC, we do encourage all members to learn more about this sacrament, why we do it, and what it means. Students of any age are encouraged to attend. In order to have enough materials for baking bread, please sign up on the sheet in the narthex or email Pastor Tanner (tanner@plcsuperior.org).

March 28th | Maundy Thursday Worship

- Join us for worship as we celebrate the First Communion – Jesus’ command to love and to remember him in the sacrament of Holy Communion. This is the first of the Great Three Days as we walk together in worship towards Easter.

March 29th | Good Friday Ecumenical Worship

- The whole community is invited to join us for a Good Friday service as we hear the story of Christ’s Passion and ponder the sin and brokenness of this world, even as we live in hope for the resurrection dawn.

March 31st | Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service at Wisconsin Point – 6:49 a.m.

- Christ is Risen! Alleluia! Join with fellow faithful folks at Lot 1 out at Wisconsin Point for a Sunrise Celebration of Christ’s resurrection!

March 31st | Easter at Pilgrim – 9:30 a.m.

- Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Come let us worship!



First Communion Class

You are invited to a First Communion Class (or a refresher course!) and bread baking party on Wednesday, March 27th at 6:00. While we don't require a specific class before someone takes communion here at PLC, we do encourage all members to learn more about this sacrament, why we do it, and what it means. Students of any age are encouraged to attend. In order to have enough materials for baking bread, please sign up on the sheet in the narthex or email Pastor Tanner (tanner@plcsuperior.org).

New Member Class

Are you new to Pilgrim? Have you recently joined the church or are thinking about membership? Wonderful! We're excited about what God is up to here at PLC and we hope you'll join us in our mission to share the love of Jesus and serve our neighbors together. If you're considering membership or became a member recently and would like to learn more about who we are, please join Pastor Tanner and PLC leaders for conversation on Sunday, April 14th right after worship. See you there!



Member Directory Photos

Calling All Pilgrim People! The time has come to put together a new photo directory for our congregation. Sign-ups will be available in the narthex for photo slots (15 minutes each) before and after worship on March 31st (Easter), April 7th, April 14th, and May 12th. Also Tuesday, April 9th and Wednesday, April 17th from 6-7 p.m.

Photos will be taken by Fred Dudderar in the studio space downstairs at Pilgrim. It is so incredibly helpful and important that we have as complete a directory as possible, so please make it a priority to sign up for a spot. We are also using this time to update our membership roster with accurate addresses, emails, and phone numbers. Forms will be available to fill out and return to the office. Thank you for your help in keeping our records up to date!

PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

Pilgrim Lutheran Church February 13, 2024 Council Minutes

I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer: Meeting called to order at 6:30 by President Mary Johnson-Garay. Pr. Tanner led us in opening prayer.

II. Those in attendance: Mary Johnson-Garay, Tad Matheson, Courtney Dietsche, Don Miller, Dan Breneman, Ted Nelson, Jeff Gronski, Sandy Breitzmann, Pastor Tanner Howard. Excused: Colleen Elonen

III. Election of Officers: For the position of President, Tad nominated Dan Breneman; Mary seconded. No other nominees were put forward, and the council approved the nomination. For the position of Vice President, Don nominated Tad Matheson; Ted seconded. No other nominees were put forward, and the council approved the nomination. For the position of Treasurer, Mary nominated Don Miller; Tad seconded. No other nominees were put forward, and the council approved the nomination. For the position of Secretary, Mary nominated Courtney Dietsche; Tad seconded. No other nominees were put forward, and the council approved the nomination. The meeting was resumed by President Dan Breneman.

IV. Approve Minutes: Tad made a motion to approve the January 9 council meeting minutes. Sandy seconded. Motion approved.

V. Pastor's Report:

- The worship service for Ash Wednesday will be at 6:00.
- There is a sign up on the board for Mariner's Sunday on May 3. Pr. Doug from the Seafarers House will be here to talk about their current ministry.
- Pr. Tanner will be away for a few days this year for ministry work and other duties. He will find pastoral care coverage closer to the dates.
- The new council installation will take place on Sunday, February 18, during the service.
- Some people have been asking about becoming members of Pilgrim. Pr. Tanner will talk to them and offer a new members class sometime in April.

VI. Music/Ministry:

- During Lent, we will be gathering supplies for various community partners for local distribution.
- LiveStream is continuing to work well, and there is a team in place to run it for every service.
- Pr. Tanner is working on some campus ministry ideas with UWS, including having a free dinner on Sundays for students, followed by a worship service and study time.
- There is a new pastor in our Malawi sister congregation, and Pr. Tanner is reaching out to renew our connection with them.
- Pr. Tanner is working on a possible connection with Northern Lights Elementary School where members of Pilgrim would read to the students at school.

Council Minutes continued . . .

- There are currently no speakers in the two transept areas at the front of the sanctuary, which makes it difficult to hear the service for the choir and anyone else in that area. Pr. Tanner will check with other congregations to see if they have any speakers they aren't using. Don mentioned that there are two speakers in the choir loft that may work.
- We will work on updating the weekly bulletins to include Eliza's name as violinist and to arrange the musician and staff sections to be more accurate and comprehensive.

VII. Property:

- The Pray Ground construction is complete, and we will need to add carpeting and finishing touches before it will be available to use.
- An additional pew has been removed, and the extra space is working well. Belknap Plumbing came in to explain how the heating system works and to tune up the new boiler.
- We have submitted the grant paperwork to the City, and we are now just waiting to hear what the City Council decides.

VIII. Finance:

- We had a balance of over \$1,800 at the end of December rather than a deficit.
- Mary made a motion to approve the financial report. Tad seconded. Motion approved.

IX. Old Business:

- For the time being, we will be locking the front door when the church is open during the week to ensure no unauthorized persons can enter. The safety protocol measures are still waiting on the City grant.
- Shane is continuing to search for a new space for his business. Pr. Tanner checked the kitchen after the recent events held downstairs, and it has been clean.

X. New Business:

- Pr. Tanner is working on dates to take pictures for the new church directory.
- A New Member Sunday is being planned to introduce new members to the congregation.
- There will be a joint ELCA service on February 25 at 10:00 at Concordia Lutheran Church (1708 John Ave.) with a meal afterward. Pilgrim will bring coffee and another beverage, such as lemonade.
- There will be two ecumenical services during Holy Week: a Good Friday service at Pilgrim at 6:00 pm, and an Easter sunrise service at Wisconsin Point at 6:49 am.
- Pr. Tanner has collected our building use policies with the aim of updating them and sending the relevant ones to local funeral homes so they will have the correct information. He has also discussed funeral responsibilities with the custodian to eliminate any confusion.
- One of Pilgrim's members would like to fund the distribution of a mailer to the three large apartment buildings near the church to advertise our services. Pr. Tanner will create a flyer to be sent out that highlights our Easter services.

Meeting adjourned at 8:06, and we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

March 2024

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Violin music lesson's scheduled throughout the month						
3 9:30 Worship Usher 2 <i>10:30 Sunday School</i> 4:00 NA	4	5 5:30 Choir Rehearsal <i>6:30 Praise practice</i>	6 3:00-4:00 piano lessons—Zach 6:00 Lent Worship 7:00 p.m. Theology	7 10:00 Bible Study 5:30-6:30 piano lessons—Zach	8	9
10 9:30 Worship * Super Bowl Caring Day Usher 3 <i>10:30 Sunday School</i> 1:30 NA committee 4:00 NA	11	12 5:30 Choir Rehearsal <i>6:30 Praise practice</i> 6:30 Council Meeting	13 10:00 Altar Polish & Cleaning <i>* need everyone's help!!</i> 3:00-4:00 piano lessons—Zach 6:00 Lent Worship 7:00 p.m. Theology on Tap	14 10:00 Bible Study 5:30-6:30 piano lessons—Zach	15 Progress Articles Due	16
17 9:30 Worship Usher 4 <i>10:30 Sunday School</i> <i>Easter Lily orders due today</i> 4:00 NA	18	19 5:30 Choir Rehearsal <i>6:30 Praise practice</i>	20 3:00-4:00 piano lessons—Zach 6:00 Lent Worship 7:00 p.m. Theology on Tap	21 10:00 Bible Study 5:30-6:30 piano lessons—Zach	22	23
24 9:30 Worship Palm Sunday Usher 1 <i>10:30 Sunday School</i> 4:00 NA	25	26 5:30 Choir Rehearsal <i>6:30 Praise practice</i>	27 3:00-4:00 piano lessons—Zach 6:00 1st Communion Class 7:00 p.m. Theology on Tap	28 10:00 Bible Study 6:00 Maundy Thursday Service Usher 2 5:30-6:30 piano lessons—Zach	29 6:00 Good Friday Service Usher 3	30
31 6:49 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service at Wisconsin Point 9:30 Worship Easter Sunday Usher 4 & 1	April 1 Office closed today in observance for Easter					

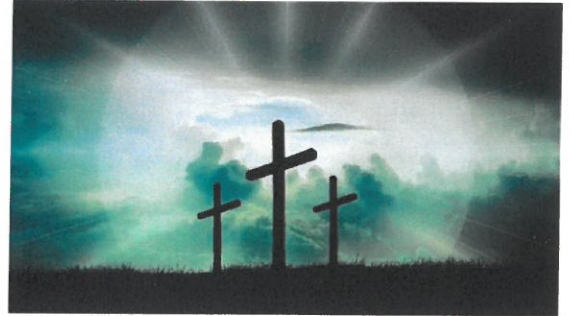
Easter 2024 A Message from Bishop Laurie *AN INCOMPLETE SENTENCE Mark 16:8*

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed. Alleluia!

The gospel of Mark begins with this verse, Mark 1:1, *The beginning of the good news¹ of Jesus Christ*. Then it ends with an incomplete sentence¹. Mark's Easter Story ends with an incomplete sentence. What was the editor thinking? Where are the punctuation police when you need them?

Look at it for yourself. Mark 16:8 in Greek

καὶ ἐξελοῦσαι ἔφυγον ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου, εἶχεν ἰγὰρ αὐτὰς τρόμος καὶ ἔκστασις· καὶ οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπαν, ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ



See, it ends with the word “gar” which can be translated “for or because.” Why did the writer of Mark end the gospel with the word “because?” Word-for-word the last part of the verse reads *to none nothing they spoke they were afraid because*

So just to be clear, the purpose of the gospel of Mark is to tell the good news of Jesus Christ and then it ends with an empty tomb and the only witnesses to it run away in fear saying nothing to anyone because...

It should be noted there is no punctuation in the original Greek and we can of course rearrange the English words and make a sentence, but still the incompleteness of the Greek sentence, abrupt ending and the incompleteness of story itself are telling.²

Matthew, Luke and John end their Easter story with Jesus appearing to the disciples after the resurrection. These gospels end with proof of the resurrection that others see with their own eyes and some even touch Jesus. Mark has no proof of the resurrection. He doesn't even finish his last sentence.

Mark 1 was intended to be just **the beginning** of the story of the good news of Jesus. It can't be completely recorded with paper and pen because it is still being written in the lives of the believers today. Friends, the story of Easter didn't end with the frightened women. If it did we wouldn't be here today. Some of Mark's Easter story will be written by your life, my life, our witness to the empty tomb and the transforming power of God love in our life. The rest of the story will be written by those who come after us and whose lives bear witness to God's power to transform death to life. We are proof of the resurrection. Our lives transformed by the power of God's love and forgiveness are proof that Jesus rose from the dead. We are writing new verses and chapters for Mark's gospel, so that the next generation will come to know and love Jesus and all generations will experience God's grace.

Rev. Laurie M. Johnson

Mark 16 *When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” ⁸So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid*

¹ McCoy and Fistler, Pulpit Fiction Podcast #540, Easter 2023

² Mark has two alternative endings (Mark 16:9-20) which many biblical scholars believe were added at a much later date by those who couldn't tolerate ending with an incomplete sentence!

³ Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay

Easter 2024 A Message from Bishop Laurie Rummaging for God

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed. Alleluia!



Does your house have a junk drawer? Do you ever find yourself going through this drawer full of stuff; feeling around looking for something that you are sure must be in there somewhere? Twist ties from bread wrappers, pens, batteries, rubber bands, nail clippers, scissors, matches, superglue, glass cleaner, coins, tiny screwdriver, ChapStick, charger cables, sticky notes... Rummaging around in your junk drawer might seem like a strange illustration for an Easter message, but I invite you to consider your memory of past life events as your junk drawer.

Think back on last year's Easter celebration. What do you remember? Rummage around in those memories to see if you can find God. You are pretty sure God is there somewhere but where? Where did you experience God last Easter? Was it in church, at the sunrise service, a sermon, a Bible reading, a hymn, an Easter egg hunt in the park, a gathering with family or friends, or a walk in the woods later that day? How did you experience God and the miracle of Christ's resurrection last Easter?

Now, think back over your lifetime, a lifetime of Easter celebrations, for me that 66 Easters. Where did you see or experience God and the power of the resurrection, God's transforming love that defeated death and gives new life?

Looking back over a day, a year, a lifetime is a spiritual practice called the Examen¹. Essentially it is rummaging through our memories, looking for when and how God was present. The Examen is a form of daily prayer that invites us to examine our day to find God. Finding God in all things and at all times gives us the strength for that next most faithful step.

I wondered what must have been going through Mary Magdalene's mind as she walked to the tomb that first Easter morning. Was she rummaging through all the memories of her time walking with Jesus? Was she trying to remember every word Jesus said? Was she looking for a clue, some way to make sense of what happened on Friday? Where was God in all of this? How could this possibly bring in God's kingdom? She must have missed something. She saw him die. How could Jesus' death be part of God's plan?

Mary arrived at the tomb and found the stone rolled away. She didn't find what she was looking for. The body wasn't there. It still made no sense. Did someone steal his body? She knows that God is in all of this, but where? She continues to search with Peter and John and finally after they leave she enters the tomb and through her tears sees the angels and then a gardener, but not a gardener but the teacher, the risen Savior; and finally through her tears she sees God. (John 20)

John 20:11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb.

Look back over a day, a year, a lifetime of trips you've made to some tomb. Was it the place that held the body of loved one, a dream that had died, a relationship that ended, or a hope that had been crushed? Rummage around in those memories to find what you know is there somewhere, God. Through the tears see the angels, the messengers; the ordinary people, those who helped you and see God!

Dear Friends, I invite you to rummage through all the memories in the junk drawer of life and find God. Think back over a lifetime, a lifetime of trips to the tomb and Easter celebrations. See God and the power of the resurrection. See God's transforming love that defeated death and gives new life. May seeing God in all of life give you the courage and strength to take your next most faithful step.

Rev. Laurie Star. Odean

¹ [Rummaging for God: Praying Backwards through Your Day - IgnatianSpirituality.com](https://www.ignatian spirituality.com/rummaging-for-god-praying-backwards-through-your-day)